



# Return Journey



## Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe Male Choir

*Swansea Valley Celebration Male Choir*

*50 Voices in Concert*

**Carbondale, Sunday, Oct. 28, 7PM**

Methodist Church, 20 N Church St, 18407 (570) 282-5740

**Tickets:** Anthracite Hotel, Carbondale Historical Society, Methodist Church  
(\$15 pre-sale ends 10/26, \$20 at the door)

**Special guest: Old Forge Elementary Choralaires**

**Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe Male Choir** reprises their inspiring 2015 tour. They bring the gifts of song, heritage, and tradition from the Swansea valleys to the communities that the Welsh helped create through coal, iron, and culture.

### **Featuring**

**Helen Gibbon**, Soprano. **Kees Huysmans**, Bass Baritone. Both are four time winners at the National Eisteddfod of Wales.

**Dr. David Lyn Rees**, Accompanist. A Primary Care Physician, Dr. Rees has been an international choir accompanist since his youth.

**Conway Morgan**, Conductor. Organist, arts educator, horse breeder.

**Facebook: CD Choir US Tour 2018**



CÔR DATHLU CWMATAWE MALE CHOIR

# BON VOYAGE USA TOUR CONCERT

St Cynog's Church, Ystradgynlais  
Saturday, 29th September at 7pm



Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe Male Choir, conducted by Conway Morgan and accompanied by Dr David Lyn Rees, will stage a Bon Voyage concert featuring the Artists who will accompany them to Boston, Pennsylvania and Washington at the end of October.



**HELEN GIBBON**

*Soprano*

**KEES HUYSMANS**

*Bass Baritone*

Both Artists have enjoyed many successes at the National Eisteddfodau!



The doors of St Cynog's will be opened at 6pm and the concert will commence at 7pm.  
The capacity of the Church is 350, and seats will not be reserved.

**Tickets £12.00**

*Available from members of the choir, or by contacting the choir secretary, Mr Colin Stroud on 01639 843166*



# Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe

At St Cynog's Church, Ystradgynlais





# Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe



Recorded at St Cynog's Church Ystradgynlais September and October 2018  
Engineered/Mixed/Mastered by Lee Mason ([www.fflach.co.uk](http://www.fflach.co.uk))  
Special Thanks to Kees, Robyn, Helen, Elaine, Marcus and Dafydd.



Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe Male Choir was formed in Ystradgynlais in November 2011 following a very successful visit to the USA by choristers from several choirs in the Tawe Valley, led by Musical Director Conway Morgan and accompanied by Dr. David Lyn Rees.

Conway is Head of the Creative Arts Faculty at a bilingual Comprehensive School, and David Lyn is currently working as a General Practitioner.

The choristers live in the valleys to the north and northeast of Swansea. Many are also members of other Choirs, while some have been encouraged to return to a male choir after several years' absence. Although Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe is young, many of its members have been singing for well over 50 years and their experience shows through in the music they make.

The Choir toured Pennsylvania again in 2015 and returned to the area around Carbondale in October 2018. This was the site of the first deep vein anthracite coal mine in the US in the early 19th century, and where the first Eisteddfod in America was held on Christmas Day 1850.

The 2018 Tour included two solo artists, Helen Gibbon and Kees Huysmans, who have been very successful in National Eisteddfodau in Wales, winning soprano and bass competitions on several occasions. They are featured on this recording with Robyn Lyn Evans who won the Blue Riband in 2007.

The Choir's music, activities, and photographs are available on their Facebook page:  
**@cordathlucwmtawe**

*Additional Musicians:*

Marcus Williams	<i>Church Organ</i>
Elaine Robbins	<i>Bass Guitar</i>
Dafydd Daniel	<i>Drums</i>



Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe Male Choir was formed in Ystradgynlais in November 2011 following a very successful visit to the USA by choristers from several choirs in the Tawe Valley, led by Musical Director Conway Morgan and accompanied by Dr. David Lyn Rees.

Conway is Head of the Creative Arts Faculty at a bilingual Comprehensive School, and David Lyn is currently working as a General Practitioner.

The choristers live in the valleys to the north and northeast of Swansea. Many are also members of other Choirs, while some have been encouraged to return to a male choir after several years' absence. Although Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe is young, many of its members have been singing for well over 50 years and their experience shows through in the music they make.

The Choir toured Pennsylvania again in 2015 and returned to the area around Carbondale in October 2018. This was the site of the first deep vein anthracite coal mine in the US in the early 19th century, and where the first Eisteddfod in America was held on Christmas Day 1850.

The 2018 Tour included two solo artists, Helen Gibbon and Kees Huysmans, who have been very successful in National Eisteddfodau in Wales, winning soprano and bass competitions on several occasions. They are featured on this recording with Robyn Lyn Evans who won the Blue Riband in 2007.

The Choir's music, activities, and photographs are available on their Facebook page:

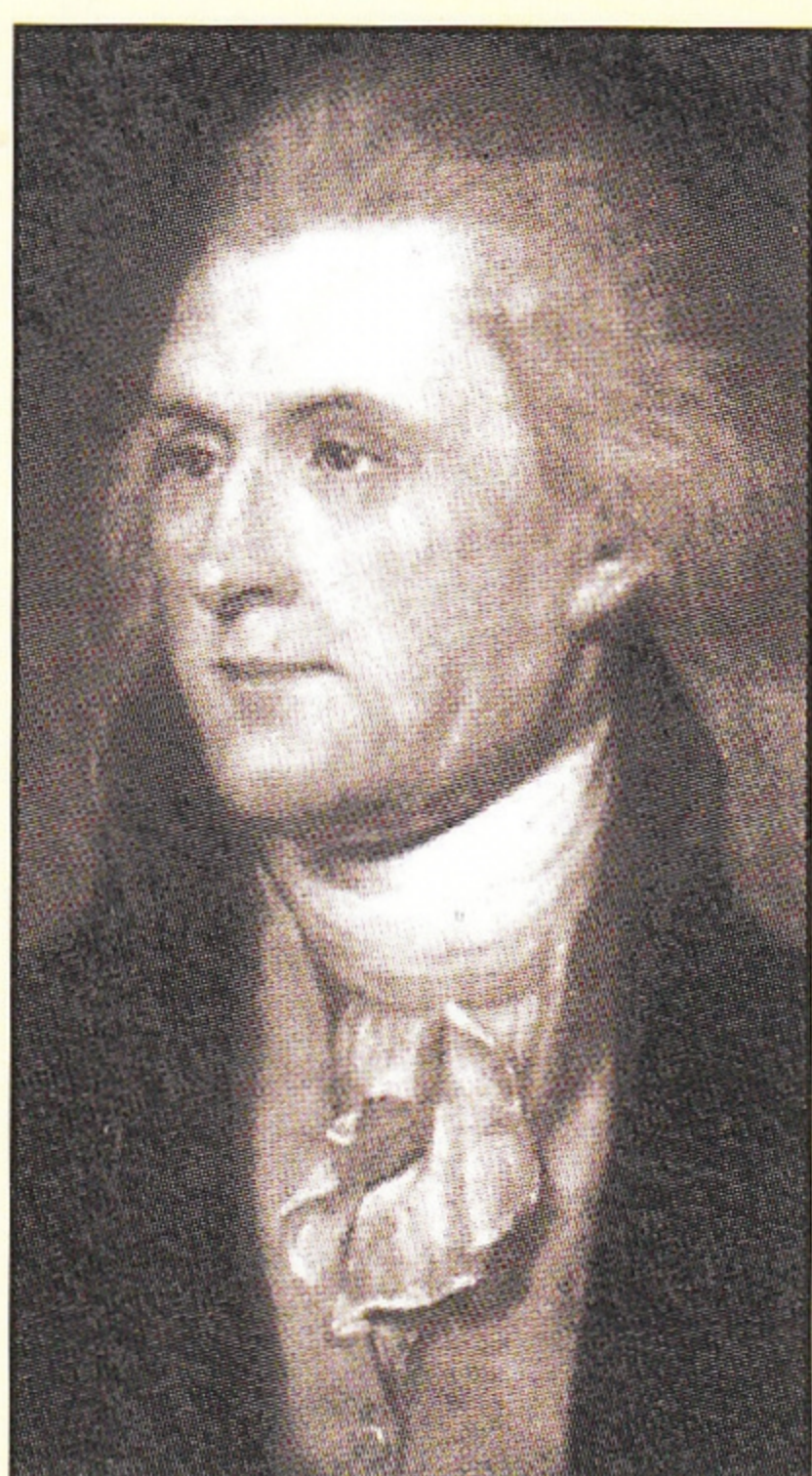
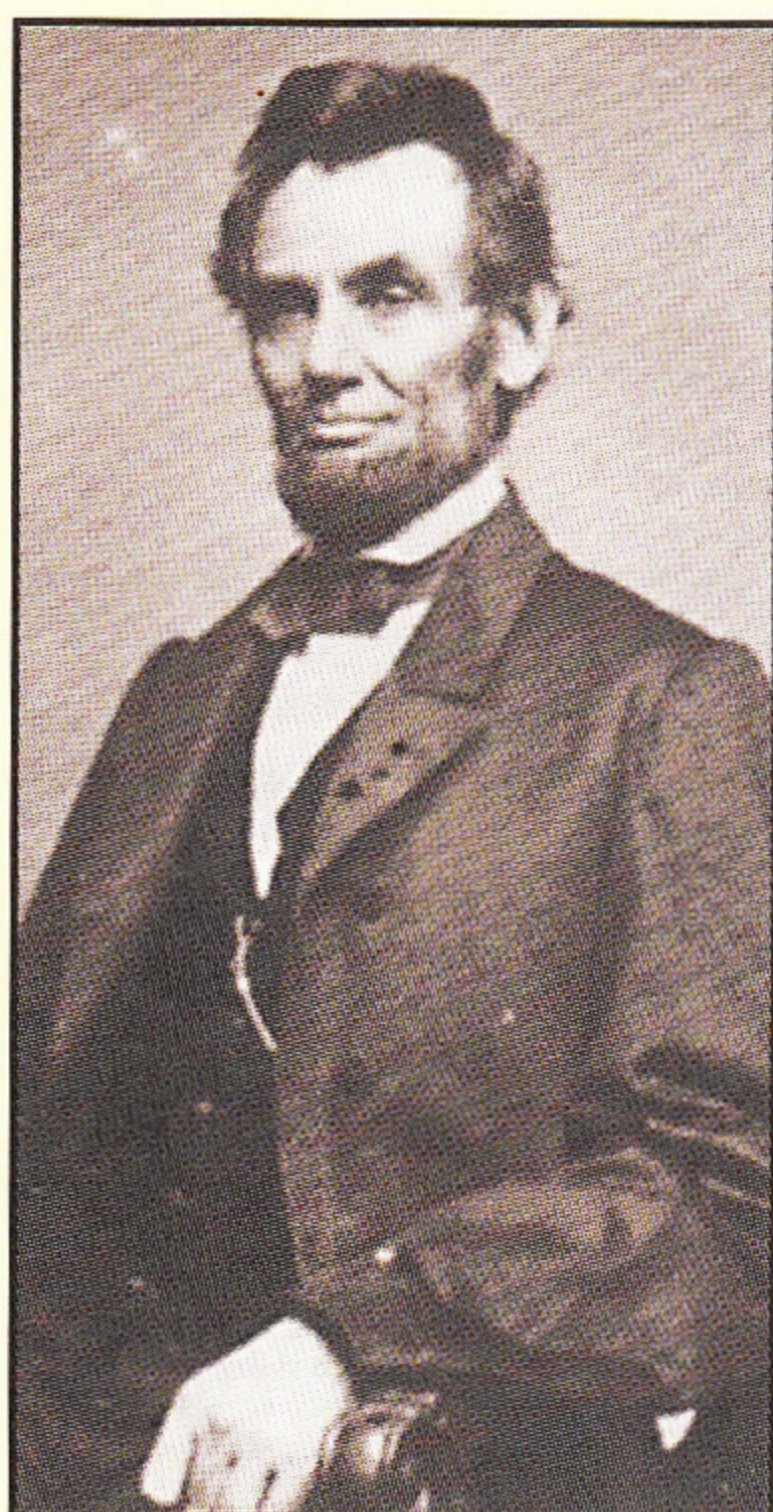
**@cordathlucwmtawe**

*Additional Musicians:*

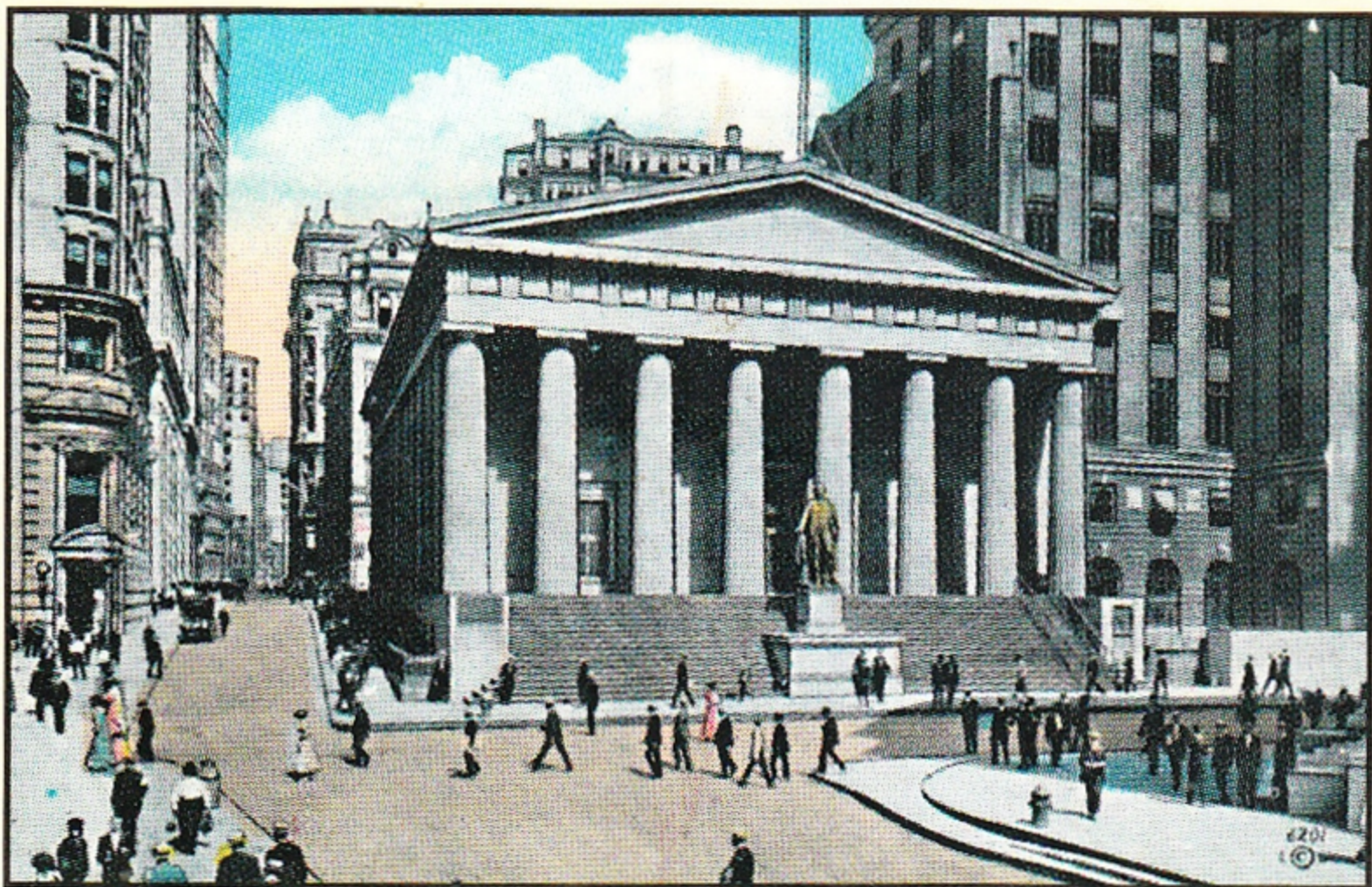
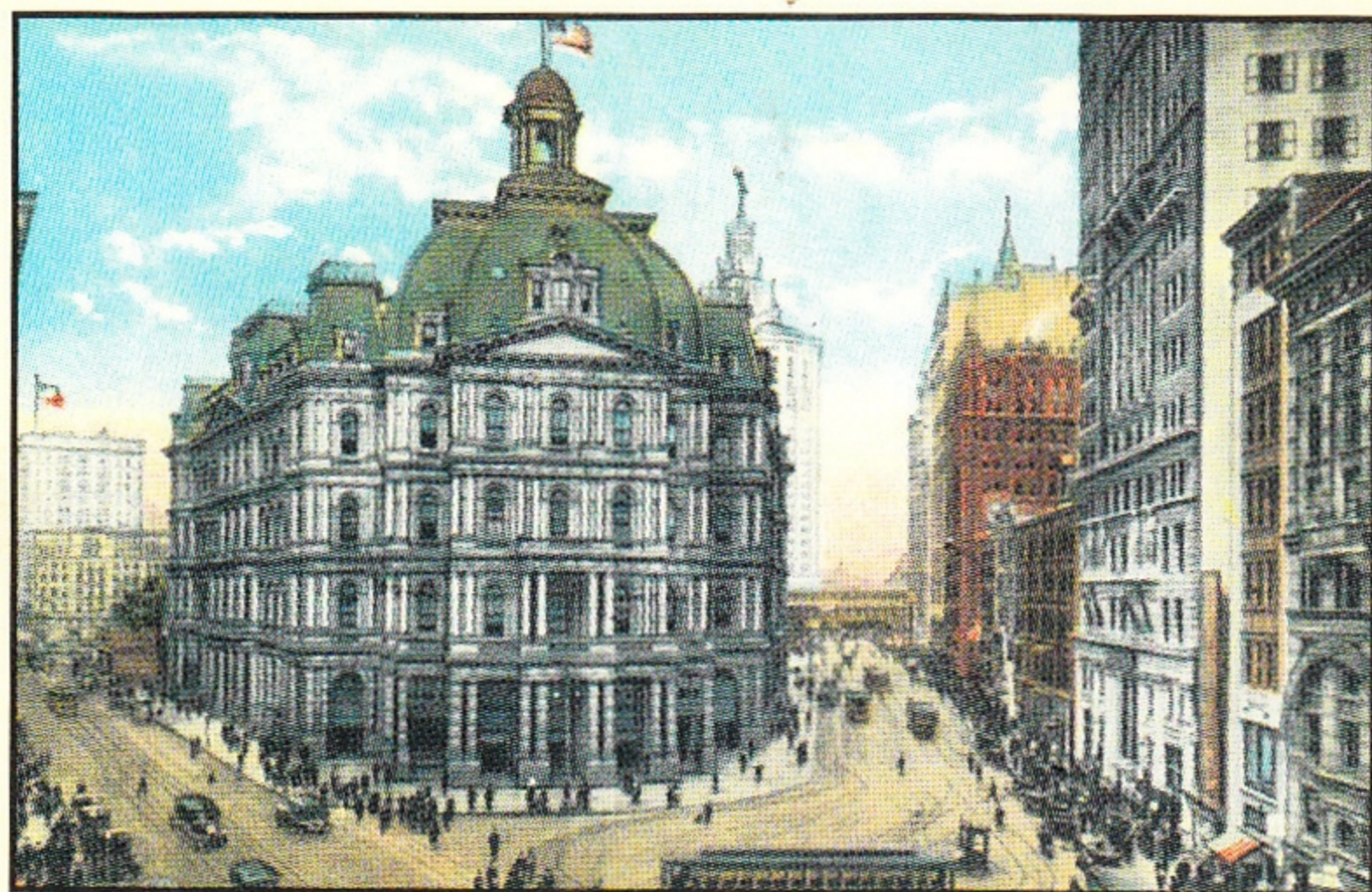
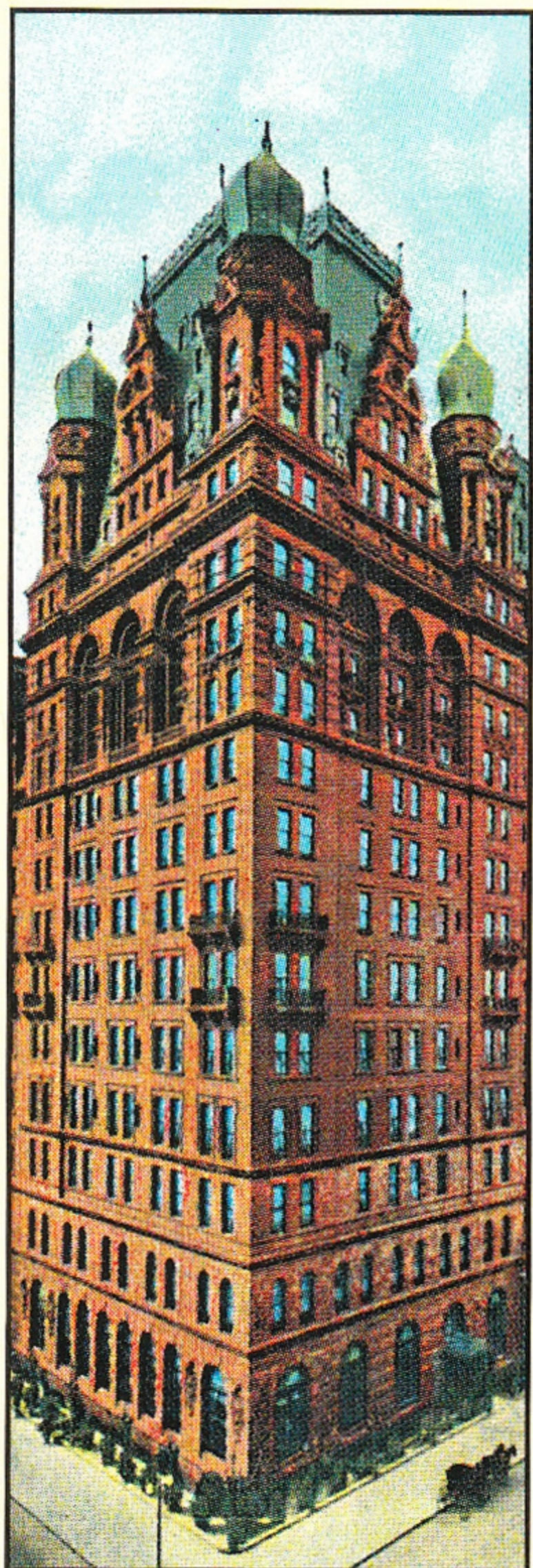
Marcus Williams	<i>Church Organ</i>
Elaine Robbins	<i>Bass Guitar</i>
Dafydd Daniel	<i>Drums</i>

← CARBONDALE

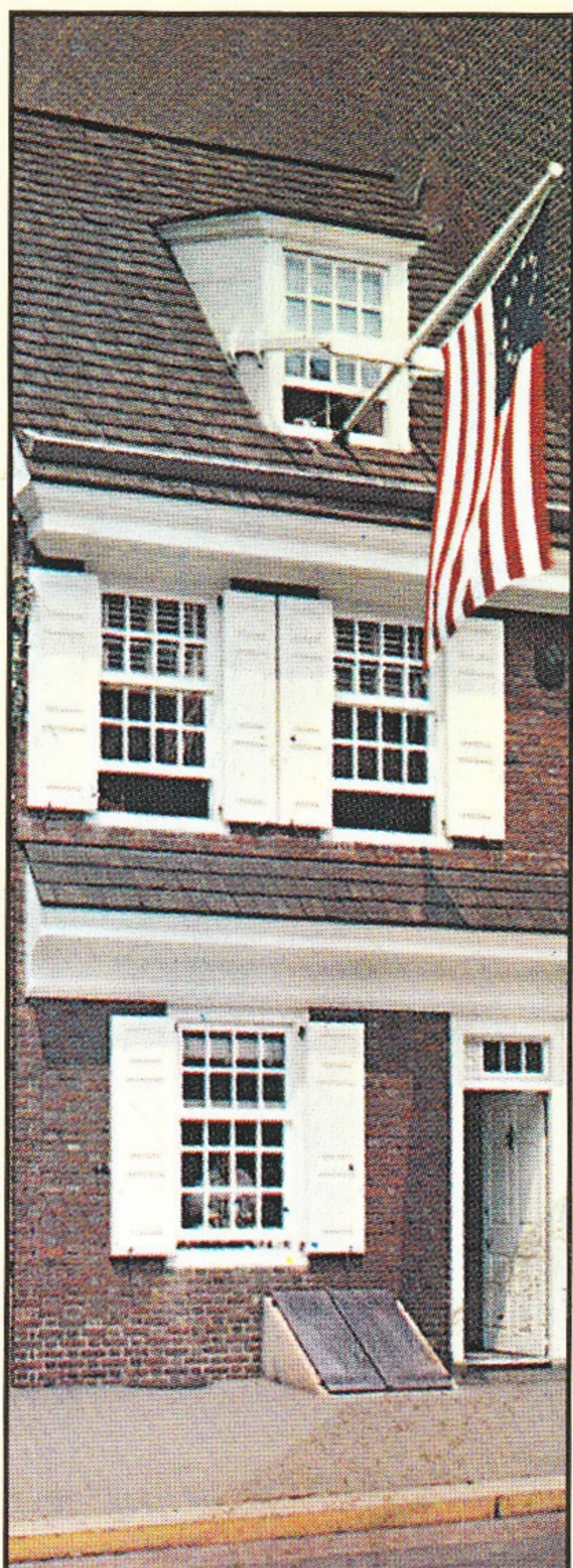




# 150 Famous Welsh Americans



W. Arvon Roberts





150 FAMOUS WELSH  
AMERICANS

Presented to  
S. Robert Powell  
on October 28, 2008  
by  
Richard Morgan



**Valley View**

**High School Choir**

**&**

**Voices of the Valley**

join

*Helen  
Gibbon*

*With my  
best wishes*

**Côr Dathlu**

**Cwmtawe**

for their

**RETURN JOURNEY**

with special guests

**Helen Gibbon, soprano**

**Kees Huysmans, bass**

**Conway Morgan, director**

**Gina Pascolini, director**

**Tuesday, October 30, 2018 at 7:00pm**

**Valley View High School Auditorium**



**Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe** formally came into existence in November 2011, but has been evolving since May 2010 when a group of choristers under the leadership of Conway Morgan visited the area around Scranton, Pennsylvania to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the local St. David's Society.

2011 marked the 150th anniversary of the building of St. Cynog's Church in Ystradgynlais, and the touring group and others were invited to give two concerts to celebrate the occasion, and to help raise money for the maintenance of the building. It is this Choir which has become **Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe Male Choir**.

The choristers live in the Swansea, Dulais and Amman valleys, in the City and County of Swansea and in Neath Port Talbot. Many are also members of other Choirs in Ystradgynlais, Morriston, Onllwyn, Dunvant and Pontardulais, while some have been encouraged to return to a male choir after several years' absence. Although **Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe** is young, many of its members have been singing for well over 50 years and their experience shows through in the music we make.

The choir performed seven concerts in our first year - the most distant being in the Parish Church of Windsor - and the Choir is very proud that Dr Rowan Williams, the recently-retired Archbishop of Canterbury, has agreed to be our first honorary President. The Choir is accompanied by Dr. David Lyn Rees.





**Conway Morgan, Director**, is Head of the Creative Arts Faculty at Ysgol Bro Dinefwr, a bi-lingual Comprehensive School in Llandeilo. Conway is an honours graduate in Music from the Church since 1978. He was the organist, accompanist, and deputy Musical Director of Côr Meibion Ystradgynlais under Leighton Jenkins, and became their Musical Director when Leighton retired in 2000.

In addition to directing choirs, Conway enjoys the thrills and challenges of staging musical theatre productions at school. His passion outside music is the breeding of Registered Welsh Ponies and Cobs, and his website address is [www.cwmntawe.com](http://www.cwmntawe.com).

Conway recently received the High Sheriff of Powys Award for Service to the Community.

**Dr. David Lyn Rees, Accompanist**, graduated with a degree in Natural Sciences from Girton College, Cambridge in 2008, and from the School of Medicine, Cardiff University in 2013. His first post was at the Princess of Wales Hospital in Bridgend and he is currently working as a Primary Care Physician in Bridgend.

He is a former pupil of Ysgol Tre-gib where he was taught by Conway Morgan. He was the school choir's accompanist and travelled with them on their tour of Canada and the United States in 2006.

David was the accompanist for Côr Meibion Ystradgynlais from April 2007 and toured with them to Wrexham, Cornwall, and Guernsey. He has been the accompanist of Côr Dathlu Cwmntawe Male Choir since it was formed in 2011 & travelled to the USA with them in 2015.



**Helen Gibbon, Soprano**, from Carmarthen, South Wales, Helen has won the soprano solo competition at the National Eisteddfod of Wales four times. She is a past member of the BBC Welsh Chorus and the Swansea Bach Choir and has toured Internationally.

Helen cannot remember a time when she was not involved in singing. There was always cultural activity in the community of Llangunnor on the outskirts of Carmarthen South Wales from where she hails. She also sang with the Carmarthen Amateur Operatic Society in their productions of the New Moon, Showboat and the Mikado.

She is a Latin graduate of Aberystwyth University, where she played the lead in a number of Gilbert and Sullivan operas, and from there went onto pursue a teaching career, first at Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera, then at Tregib Llandeilo and at Ysgol Bro Myrddin where she was Head of Religious Studies. While a student at Aberystwyth she studied singing with Roderick Jones and later Hazel Holt and continued her studies with Blue Riband Winner Nancy Bateman and the acclaimed operatic singer Joan Carlyle.

She has on four occasions won the soprano solo at national level making her a contender for the Blue Riband at the National Eisteddfod of Wales and has also been successful as the conductor of children's choirs at the Urdd National Eisteddfod. She is a past member of the BBC Welsh Chorus and the Swansea Bach Choir and She has also trained children's choirs and accompanied them on tour of Holland and North America.

She was guest soloist of Ystradgynlais Male Voice Choir on their tour of North America in 1989, 2000 and of Côr Dathlu in 2010 and 2015.

Swansea and which has also extensively travelled, performing at venues in Poland, Barcelona, Germany, Austria and in Rovigo in Northern Italy. Her vocal repertoire is extensive and she continues her vocal studies with Miriam Bowen. Helen enjoys the privilege of being able to entertain audiences both as conductor and soloist.



**Kees Huysmans, Bass**, born and bred in the Netherlands, Kees came to live in Wales in 1981. He joined the local male voice choir, to learn the language of heaven and discovered the pleasure of singing.

He now performs regularly at local concerts and Eisteddfodau. Some of the highlights of his singing career have been a Master Class with Stuart Burrows and taking part in the Joseph Parry opera, Blodwen. Another highlight was returning to Holland with Cor Meibion Cwmann and performing there in a number of concerts.

Kees has won the Bass solo competition in the National Eisteddfod in 2011, 2012 and 2014. In 2016 he won the coveted Rhuban Glas in the Abergavenny Eisteddfod. He has sung with the Burry Port Opera in Merry Wives of Windsor, the role of Mr Page in 2013, in their production of Maria Stuarda in 2014 as Sir William Cecil and in 2015 he was one of the conspirators in the Masked Ball by Verdi. He also sung the role of Gremin with Opra Cymru in 2014 and again in a production for Rhosygilwen in July 2017. Another highlight last year was to perform with my wife in Melbourne Australia for the Welsh communities annual St Davids day celebrations. The weight of expectations from the nation, singing the “can y cadeirio” in the Eisteddfod Ynys Môn last year.

Very much looking forward to discovering the audiences during our tour of the USA.



# **Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe**

## **FIRST TENOR**

**Roger Castle, Gareth J. Davies, Noel Davies, David Hewlett,  
Roy Higgins, Lyndsey Morgan, Jeff Ripton, Wyn Davies,  
Stuart Kangley, Mal Clark, Brian Davies, & Lyn Thomas**

## **SECOND TENOR**

**Jeff Lloyd, Clive Wilson, Dai Wyn Thomas, Malcolm Evans,  
John Lundie, Alwyn Hughes & Ivor Griffiths**

## **BARITONE**

**Royden Bevan, Michael Evans, Kenneth Richmond, Mike John,  
Jim Lenette, Colin Stroud, William Thomas, Rhys Williams,  
Arwyn Morgan, Del Morgan, Huw Williams,  
Brian Llewelyn & Huw Rees**

## **BASS**

**Alan George, Ben Tudor Lewis, Richard Morgan,  
Barry Evans, Howard Johnson, Frank Groom, Owen Pugh,  
Glyn Thomas & Gwyn Davies**



Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe repertoire chosen from the following::

Speed Your Journey.....	(Nabucco) Verdi
Bring Him Home <i>from Les Miserables</i> .....	CM Schoenberg
Gwahoddiad.....	L Hartsough
Mi glywaf dyner lais.....	L Hartsough
World in Union.....	Skarbeck, Holstarr. MD Williams
Hafan gobaith.....	D Rees
Anfonaf angel.....	Robat Arwyn
Dashenka.....	EI Ffwoc
You Raise Me Up.....	Graham, Leveland
The Wonder of You.....	Baker Night
Anthem <i>from Chess</i> .....	T Rice, B Anderson, B Ulvaeus
Shenandoah.....	American Folk
Llanfair.....	R Williams
With A Voice of Singing.....	Martin Shaw
Psalms 23.....	Euros Rhys Evans, arr DL Jenkins
You'll Never Walk Alone <i>from Carousel</i> ..	R Rodgers, O Hammerstein
O Gymru.....	Richards, Brinley
Y Cwm.....	Chiswell, CA Morgan
Bui Doi <i>from Miss Saigon</i> .....	CM Shoenberg
Superstar.....	B Bramlett, L Russell
When the Saints Go Marching In.....	traditional, arr. Hood
Eli Jenkins' Prayer.....	R Hancock-Child
Nun's Chorus <i>from Casanova</i> .....	JStrauss, arr. DL Jenkins



# **Valley View High School Choir**

## **SOPRANO**

Katelyn Ainey, \*Haley Bronson, \*Shaylyn Chilek,  
\*Beatrice Chindemi, Aaliyah Condida, \*Hannah Danielowski,  
Emily Doherty, Mackenzie Drutherosky, Destiny Farmer,  
Cammie Gillar, \*Kara Hirjak, Mikaylaa Katchmore,  
Brianna Kohut, Jacey Kondash, \*Emily Mattise, \*Mia Mercatili,  
Zoe Metshulat, Kayla Morgan, Lexie O'Halloran,  
\*Tori Reed, Natalie Sweeney, Christina Torres,  
Maddison Walsh, Julia Zadzura & Nicole Zuzzio

## **ALTO**

Olivia Blockberger, Mayer Crean, Delayne Dennis,  
\*Dominique Ferraro, Ava Giombetti, Melina Gioupis,  
Liz Hubal, Bryn Karlavige, Roxi Lameo, Elizabeth Lown,  
\*Morgan Masters, \*Gia Mercatili, Paige Morgan,  
\*Katie Morisco, Julia Newberry, Jocelyn Oveson,  
\*Mia Tomassoni, \*Mollie Walsh & \*Lorna Yushinsky

## **TENOR**

Connor Carden, \*Ryan Coleman, Hayden Holly, Noah McKane,  
\*Noah Nielsen, \*Noah Reed, \*Ethan Symuleski & \*Vito Rotell

## **BASS**

Evan Anderson, \*Noah Benjamin, \*Logan Burns,  
Elisha DeSouza, Joseph DeSouza, John Evans, \*Bobby Ferraro,  
Sam Hernandez, Chris Huynh, \*Jared Ramos, \*David Reyes,  
\*Leo Sirianni, \*DaiCoda Strackbein. Brady Snyder,  
\*A.J. Temple, Gavin West & \*Nathaniel Worrell

\* Voices of the Valley members



**Valley View School District** has a long tradition of musical excellence and is most grateful and thankful for the continued support of the Valley View Administration, Valley View Community and most especially the Music Parents.

The **Valley View High School Choir** is an elective course which meets and rehearses every other day for ninety minutes. Numerous members of the choir have achieved choral honors within the National Association for Music Educators (NAfME) and its state affiliate, the Pennsylvania Music Education Association (PMEA). Students have successfully auditioned for and performed in District, Region, All-State, All-Eastern and National Choirs.

They are active within the Valley View Community often performing for school events and beyond. The entire music department was featured for Music in Our Schools Month in March of 2014 on the local ABC Affiliate, WNEP-TV. The entire choir is thrilled to have Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe return to the Lackawanna Valley and honored to have them at our school.

**Voices of the Valley** is a twenty nine member select choir from students who participate in Valley View High School's Concert Choir. When Gina Pascolini, Choral Director for the Valley View High School, was asked if she and her students would perform with a visiting Welsh Male Choir, she had no idea that her acceptance would result in an international odyssey of friendship and song.

In October of 2015, Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe, (The Swansea Valley Celebration Choir), came to the Lackawanna Valley, a place of historical significance to Wales and America, to sing and honor those who had come before in the 1830's. Valley View's talented youngsters had earned a reputation of excellence and professionalism. Gina, was known to the choir for Valley View's *Vivace!* choir performance for The Saint Francis Assisi Kitchen. This was an unforgettable event featuring The Catholic Choral Society, The Burlington Welsh Male Choir, and Valley View's *Vivace!*. Their performance with the 60 voice Swansea choir directed by one of Wales' most renowned conductors exceeded everyone's expectations.



# PROGRAM

Welcome.....Dr. Rose Minniti, Superintendent

## Valley View High School Choir

The Star Spangled Banner.....Francis Scott Key  
Rhyfelgyrch Gwyr Harlech.....arr. Leonard Morris  
Tshotsoloza.....Trad. South African, adapted, Jeffrey Ames  
Ryan Coleman, soloist

## Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe

Selections from varied repertoire  
featuring soloists

Helen Gibbon, Soprano  
Kees Huysmans, Bass

*Both  
autographed  
this  
program,*

~ INTERMISSION ~

## Voices of the Valley

Rachie/Alleluia..... Caradog Roberts  
White Winter Hymna.....Robin Pecknold, Arr. Alan Billingsly

Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe  
Selections from varied repertoire  
featuring soloists  
Helen Gibbon, Soprano  
Kees Huysmans, Bass

*as did  
Barry  
Evans*

## Combined Choirs

Mae Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau.....James James



# **U p c o m i n g   C h o r a l   E v e n t s**

**November 8, 2018 - 7:00pm**

**Valley View High School Auditorium**

**Valley View High School Concert Choir and Voices of the**

**Valley Annual Cabaret**

**Featuring VVHS Choir students**

**November 9, 2018 - 2:00pm**

**Gino Merli Veterans Center**

**Voices of the Valley performs for  
residents of Gino Merli Veteran's Center**

**November 10, 2018 - 11:00 am**

**Voices of the Valley performs for World War I Dedication**

**McDade Park, Scranton**

**November 14, 2018**

**Voices of the Valley recording session**

**for WBRE *Sounds of Season***

**Aired during December 2018 on WBRE**

**December 5, 2018 - 5:30pm**

**Viewmont Mall, Scranton, PA**

**Valley View High School Concert Choir**

**and Voices of the Valley in Concert**

**December 6, 2018 - 7:00pm**

**Valley View High School Auditorium**

**Valley View High School Concert Choir**

**and Voices of the Valley in Concert**

**December 9, 2018 - 2:00pm**

**Queen of Angels Parish, Jessup, Pa**

**Voices of the Valley performs their annual holiday concert for  
the community.**



**December 16, 2018 - 2:30pm**  
**St Mary's Church of the Immaculate Conception,**  
**Wilkes-Barre, Pa**

**Voices of the Valley performs their inaugural holiday concert  
for the Luzerne County community.**

**December 19, 2018 5:30-8:30pm**  
**Voices of the Valley's 3rd annual**  
**caroling for the Valley View community.**

**January 2019 Date TBA**  
**Voices of the Valley performs at**  
**Christ the King Parish, Archbald, PA**

**May 5, 2019 - 2:00pm**  
**Queen of Angels Parish, Jessup, Pa**  
**Voices of the Valley performs their annual spring concert for  
the community.**

**June 2, 2019 - 3:00pm**  
**Temple Hesed, Scranton, PA**  
**Voices of the Valley performs an encore of the May 5th spring  
concert for the community.**

**June 13-24, 2019**  
**Voices of the Valley Italy Tour**



Very nice program produced  
by Valley View. The Methodist  
Church + Western Wayne +  
Bethlehem should have  
produced a program,

**Follow the Performing Groups on Social Media!**

*but they did not.*

**~Facebook~**

**@CorDathluCwmtawe**

**@CSChoirUSTour2018**

**@VVHSPerformingArts**

**@VoicesoftheValley**

**~Twitter~**

**@VVPerformingArt**

**@VVCVoices**

**~Instagram~**

**~vvhsmusic~**

**vvc\_voicesofthevalley**

**~YouTube~**

**VVHS VoicesoftheValley**



# **SPECIAL THANKS**

**Mr. Ted Frutchey**

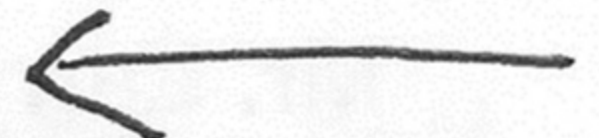
**Carbondale Historical Society**

**Tour Coordinator**

**Ambassador to Wales**

**Dr. S. Robert Powell, President**

**Carbondale Historical Society**



**Mr. Jerry Williams**

**Media Consultant**

**Mr. Conway Morgan, Director**

**Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe**

**Mr. Alan George, President**

**Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe**

**Mr. Selwyn Morris**

**Côr Dathlu Cwmtawe**

**Mr. Marty Ort**

**Accompanist**

**Mr. Ken Rupp**

**Lights & Sound**

**Valley View Performing Arts Booster Parents & Officers**

**Valley View Administration and Board of Education**

**Mr. Kelly Swift & the Valley View Maintenance Staff**

**Mr. Nick Germano & the Valley View Food Service Staff**



## **Valley View Administration**

**Dr. Rose Minniti, Superintendent**

**Mr. Corey Castellani, Business Manager**

**Mr. Michael Boccella, Director of Curriculum and Instruction**

**Mr. Christopher Mendicino, High School Principal**

**Mr. Larry Pegula, Assistant High School Principal**

**Mr. Craig Sweeney, Middle School Principal**

**Mr. James McKane, Assistant Middle School Principal**

**Mr. Brian Durkin, Intermediate Principal**

**Mrs. Maria Kishel, Elementary Principal**

**Mr. Jeremy Pichany, Director of Special Education**

**Mr. Kelly Swift, Director of Maintenance**

## **Valley View School Board**

**Mrs. Ellen Nielsen, President**

**Mr. Tom Owen, Vice-President**

**Mr. Joseph Mondak, Secretary**

**Mr. Joseph Koniszewski, Treasurer**

**Mr. James Addley**

**Ms. Tina Jezuit**

**Mr. Curt Camoni**

**Mr. William Shanley**

**Mr. Christopher Smith**

**Attorney Richard Fanucci, School Board Solicitor**

**Mr. Chris Killiany, Athletic Director**

**Mr. Ernie Williams, Technology Coordinator**

**Mr. Fran Paone, Microcomputer Technician**





# Carbondale News

Friday, October 26, 2018

f facebook.com/CarbondaleNews

\$1.25

## Welsh Choir's 'Return Journey'

By Karen Bernhardt Toolan

For The News

CARBONDALE — Tradition, culture, history, a love of music. All of this and more come together during five remarkable area choral concerts when the Cor Dathlu Cwmtawe (aka, Swansea Valley Celebration) Male Choir shares its 'Return Journey,' beginning at 7:00pm October 28th at the Carbondale Methodist Church.

"This group of 50 men from Wales with the most beautiful voices was last here three years ago, and their two concerts sold out. When they told us that they 'wanted to come to America' again, we immediately began planning for this reprise visit," said Carbondale's Jerry Williams, the choir's local press coordinator.

"Once again, the choir will perform traditional Welsh songs and hymns, along with a wide-ranging variety of American classical, spiritual, modern, and Broadway selections."

Additional 7:00pm concerts will be held on October 29th (Western Wayne HS), October 30th (Valley View HS), October 31st (Wilkes-Barre First Presbyterian Church), and November 1st (Bethlehem Trinity Episcopal Church).

Advance tickets are \$15 or \$20 at the door and are available at 570-282-0385; or on Facebook: CD Choir US Tour 2018.

Likened to their previous concerts here in 2010 and 2015, this choral event evokes and reawakens our cultural awareness, which spans more than 185 years of NEPA history. As Dr. Robert Powell, President of the Carbondale Historical Society, explained, "Ninety Welsh mining families first arrived here in 1830 when they were specifically recruited to bring their talents and skills to enhance our early coal and iron industries. Economically and culturally, their arrival had a profound and generative impact on Carbondale, Scranton, and the nation — it was the beginning

**See CHOIR, A3**





**Displaying the flag of Wales in anticipation of the 'Return Journey' of the Swansea Valley Celebration Male Choir are Dr. Robert Powell, Carbondale Historic Society president, and Jerry Williams, event PR coordinator. Logistics coordinator Ted Frutchey, who was unavailable for the photo, spent 10 months coordinating every aspect of the choir's visit. Five memorable evening choral concerts are scheduled throughout the region, Oct. 28 to Nov. 1. [PHOTO**

**BY KAREN BERNHARDT TOOLAN]**



# CHOIR

*From Page A1*

of America's Industrial Revolution.

In 1830, it was the Welsh who brought the first underground coal mine. And in 1840, Welsh anthracite iron workers wrought the Scranton Iron Furnaces."

Throughout the century that followed, a "culture of choral superlatives" also grew and developed in the form of the first North American eisteddfod.

"In Wales, this is a competitive festival of music and poetry that has gone on for generations and continues to this day," Williams shared. "The first eisteddfod was actually held here ... Carbondale was its host city in 1850. These festivities were unsurpassed in both artistic standards and numbers of participants."

Along with the technology introduced by the Welsh, their tradition of choirs has also become a large part of NEPA's own culture.

Similar Scranton-area choirs eventually developed and competitions sang to audiences of thousands. During the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, both the 260-voice Scranton Choral Union and the 200-voice Cymmrodorion Choral Society performed to huge audiences. "Their competitors included the renown Mormon Tabernacle Choir, which was also founded by Welsh immigrants," said Williams. "History recounts that the Scranton Choral Union brought home the \$5k first prize, Utah the second, and the Cymmrodorians took third place."

Many fascinating traditions and rich cultural sharings embrace the NEPA region, and those brought to us by the Welsh continue to grow

today.

"Through their inter-generational mentoring, the Welsh choirs have paired up with area school choirs," Williams continued. "The kids hear these adults singing as wonderfully as they do, and they just think it's way cool! These choirs have helped enhance the importance of the arts, and music and singing are a huge part of that. As such, the choirs have inspired many of our area youth who've come to realize that through hard work then can make great things happen for themselves. And they can be part of something really special."

Exemplifying this cultural sharing, the Old Forge Elementary Choralaires will also perform during the October 28th concert.

On October 29th, the Western Wayne HS Marching Band will share the stage. About 100 boys and girls of Voices of the Valley Choir will also sing on October 30th. On October 31st, Dr. John Vaida will present a pre-concert organ interlude.

Featured among the performers will be soprano Helen Gibbon and bass baritone Kees Huysmans, both four-time winners at the National Eisteddfod of Wales. Pianist Dr. David Lyn Rees is a primary care physician from a small Welsh town, and he has been an international choir accompanist since his youth. And Conway Morgan, who is an arts educator, organist, and horse breeder in Wales, will conduct the choir.

"It's amazing to see and hear how these everyday people have come together to continue sharing their own rich culture and traditions, while presenting the world with their amazing vocal talents. Carbondale is very happy and extremely proud to welcome the Welsh Male Choir here again," Williams said.